

FEATURES

Recruit ‘picks up’ where left off, with same senior DI

After broken foot forces him to wait, success comes for motivated recruit

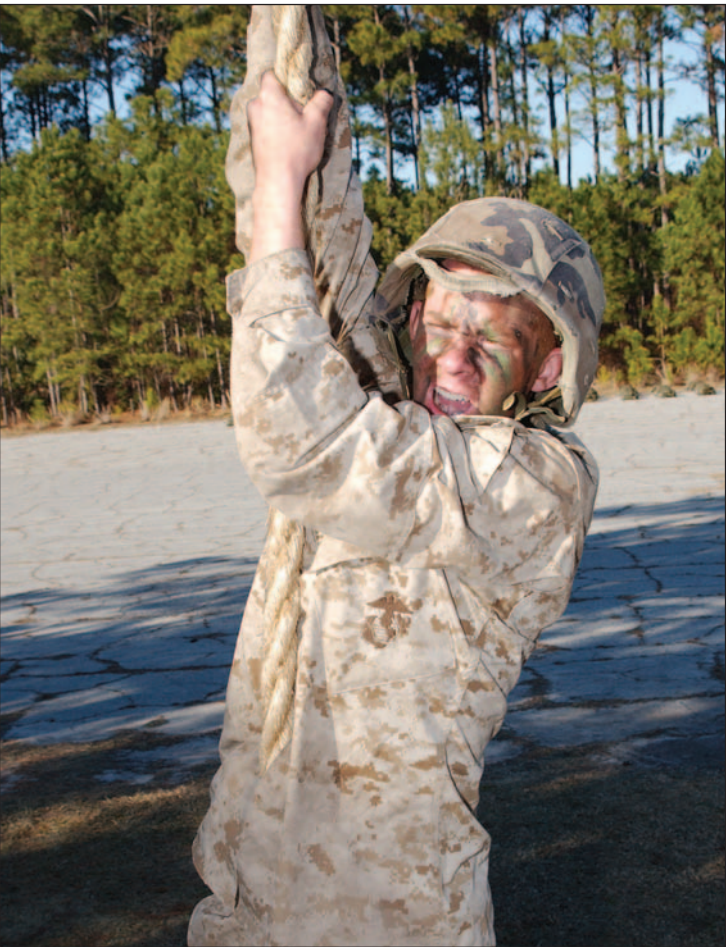
CPL. JENNIFER BROFER
STAFF WRITER

“We started together, we’re going to finish together,” is a well-known motivational cadence that echoes from the mouths of recruits as they hike long miles on their strenuous trek to become Marines. For Recruit Lee Magouirk and his senior drill instructor, this cadence rings especially true. On Training Day 48, a little more than two weeks before graduation, Magouirk was medically dropped from Platoon 1082, Alpha Co., 1st RTBn., to Medical Rehabilitation Platoon after breaking his left foot. Instead of losing hope, Magouirk kept his spirits up through the encouragement of his former senior drill instructor, who knew the meaning of the words “never leave a Marine behind.” Twelve weeks and countless hours of rehabilitative therapy later, Magouirk was finally considered medically fit to resume training. He picked up with Platoon 1002, Alpha Co., 1st RTBn., with Senior Drill Instr-

uctor Gunnery Sgt. Vernon Geter, the same senior drill instructor who inspired him to continue with training and become a Marine. Today, Recruit Magouirk proudly marched across the parade deck as Private Magouirk. He said he could not have done so without the help of the Marine who was there since the beginning. “He picked me back up when I got out of MRP ... that wasn’t an easy thing to do, but he cared enough to do that for me,” said the 18-year-old Carriere, Miss., native, with an audible southern accent. Geter said he pulled strings in order to pick up Magouirk out of MRP, believing he was a good recruit with a lot of heart. “The reason I went through all the trouble I did was because he went through training with a broken foot and didn’t even tell me,” he explained. “I saw him limping around, so I told him to take his boot off and his foot was all swollen.” “For a recruit to go through all that shows he has a lot of heart,” added Geter. Unfortunately for Magouirk, his injury occurred right before the platoon was to go to A-line, so he was dropped. One of the hardest parts of MRP was leaving behind a platoon of recruits with whom Magouirk

had established a special bond. “When I got dropped, it really hurt leaving them because they were like my brothers,” he said. “Even though we all come from different places, we’re all working toward the same goal.” Magouirk’s aspiration to join the “band of brothers” came about after one of his friends joined the Corps, convincing him that it was the right path for him as well and shipped to Parris Island after completing high school in July 2003. “There’s something about being a Marine that’s special ... once a Marine, always a Marine,” said the brown-eyed Magouirk. “I’ve known a couple of people in the past who were Marines, and there’s just something special about it. That’s what I wanted was to be a Marine.” Magouirk’s opportunity to serve his country was delayed after being dropped, and although he was no longer in a training platoon, his desire helped him continue through therapy. After regaining his ability to walk without crutches, he became a squad leader. Magouirk said letters sent by his family, as well as his Christian faith, helped him to cope with the ordeal. However, Geter also played a tremendous role. “I would definitely say he was a real inspiration to me,” he said.

Magouirk’s unrelenting motivation in the face of adversity did not go unnoticed by Geter. “I think I’m proud because of the simple fact that he could have easily given up, but he didn’t. He worked hard,” said Geter. Geter said he visited Magouirk at MRP and even stopped to talk to him at the mess hall, to see how he was doing. “He’d tell me he was going to try and get me back, and that was something I looked forward to,” said Magouirk. Through patience, impeccable timing and numerous phone calls made by Geter, Magouirk’s wish was finally granted, and he was picked up on Training Day 42 in the same squad bay he started in. “I think he put in a good word for me because he wanted to get me back,” said Magouirk, with a smile creeping onto his lips. With graduation now behind him, Magouirk said he is looking forward to going home and spending time with his family, but will not forget the person who helped transform him into the Marine he is today. “He’s probably the best senior drill instructor on the island,” said Magouirk. “He’s what a Marine is supposed to be – he’s a Marine’s Marine, and I have a lot of respect for him.”



Cpl. Jennifer Brofer
Recruit Lee Magouirk, Platoon 1002, Alpha Co., 1st RTBn., struggles to hang onto the rope during Event 3 of the Crucible Jan. 14. Magouirk was medically dropped from Alpha Co. more than three months ago after breaking his foot. He graduated today under the leadership of Gunnery Sgt. Vernon Geter, the same SDI who motivated him through his former platoon and MRP.

Vehicle repairs made easy, affordable with Depot Auto Skills Center



Cpl. Jennifer Brofer
Sergeant Ron King, Auto Skills Development Center customer, degreases the gasket surface in order to reapply the rear differential gasket and cover on a friend’s 1994 Jeep Grand Cherokee Jan. 16. King said he has saved well over \$4,000 just by doing his vehicle repairs himself.

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Whether it is a simple oil change or completely rebuilding a car’s engine, the Auto Skills Development Center has everything needed to help get anyone’s vehicle up and running. For a nominal fee of \$2 - \$3 per hour, active duty and reserve service members, DoD civilians and their family members can access all of the services available at the center, including use of all tools, stalls with lifts and maintenance assistance from mechanic helpers. “I come in here because I think it’s the best hobby shop in the Tri-Command,” said Sgt. Ron King, NCOIC of the Depot shooting team, who explained that he has saved thousands of dollars by doing his vehicle repairs himself. “Everything you need to work on a vehicle is pretty much here – all the tools and equipment, plus they have a knowledgeable staff. I rebuilt my truck in here, and I saved well over \$3,000 - \$4,000.” According to Ray Cording, manager for the center, the greatest benefit of utilizing the shop is cost savings. “For you to take a car downtown to get a CV-axle replaced, it would cost you anywhere from \$300 - \$500,” said Cording. “The average axle costs about \$70, and you spend less than

\$6 in here doing it. If you’ve never done it before, you can change both axles in under two hours.” Customers only need to purchase the part that needs fixing and bring it in to the shop; personnel will provide the rest. The center also provides various services, such as transmission flushes, throttle body cleaning, brakes, injection cleaning and oil changes, said Cording. “The actual oil change costs about \$10.50,” he said. “That’s a \$15 dollar savings off of getting it done out in town.” The center also has vehicle diagnostic equipment with a CD-ROM program for all vehicles from 1983 – present, which allows users to find out how to fix anything on their car with the simple click of a button. With mechanics readily available to lend a helping hand, even the most inexperienced individuals can make repairs to their vehicle, said Cording. “Don’t be afraid to try it,” he said. “Working on a car, with the exception of the electronics, is like a jigsaw puzzle. If you can put a jigsaw puzzle together, you can work on a car. It’s just a little bit dirtier. Some people need more assistance than others, and we’re here to provide that assistance.” The center is open Monday, Thursday and Friday, noon - 8 p .m., and Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.